

Ministry of the Environment programs and initiatives

New Air Monitoring Bus

A new mobile air monitoring vehicle was unveiled by Environment Minister Norm Sterling at Pollution Probe's Clean Air Fair at Toronto's Metro Square on June 23, 1998.

The Ministry of the Environment has a new mobile Air Monitoring Bus that will monitor smog-causing pollutants anywhere in the province to assess their impact on local air quality.

The bus concentrates on smog-related gases — just like the ministry's monitoring stations that report the Air Quality Index at 27 locations in 19 cities. It will complement that existing network of air monitoring stations across the province.

The bus is equipped to give continuous readings of local air quality in terms of smog-causing pollutants such as ozone, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide and inhalable particulates. It can also moni-

tor for airborne gaseous mercury, sulphur compounds and volatile organic compounds. The vehicle is also equipped to collect meteorological data while monitoring pollution.

It will be mobilized to gather information in response to air quality issues in communities where no permanent Air Quality Index monitoring station exists. It will also be on call to supplement the ministry's mobile air monitoring TAGA units that measure a broad range of toxic contaminants.

The vehicle has a number of applications, including air quality studies, audits of private/public sector air monitoring programs, and site selection of permanent private/public air monitoring sites.



Pollution Probe's Ken Ogilvie and Environment Minister Norm Sterling with the ministry's new air monitoring bus.

The unit will be equipped with a state-of-the-art electronic communications package including a satellite link for rapid data transfer from anywhere in the province to the ministry's air quality office.

Studies have shown that smog aggravates a wide range of serious health ailments, especially respiratory illnesses such as asthma and bronchitis. It damages the environment by harming vegetation, materials and crops. Whether it's assessing air quality in a community with no permanent air monitoring station, or studying smog-causing pollutants at a particular site, the air monitoring bus is a small but important part of the ministry's plan to combat smog.

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